

THE GOLDEN LOCKET : The Thrilling Experience of TARZAN : By Edgar Rice Burroughs

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THE little British army in East Africa, after suffering severe reverses at the hands of a numerically much superior force, was at last coming into its own. The German offensive had been broken, and the Huns were now slowly retreating along the railway to Tanga. The break in the German lines had followed the clearing of a section of their left-flank trenches of native soldiers by Tarzan and Numa the lion, upon that memorable night when the Ape-man had loosed a famishing man-eater among the superstitious and terror-stricken blacks. The Second Rhodesian Regiment had immediately taken possession of the abandoned trench and from this position their flanking fire had raked contiguous sections of the German line, the diversion rendering possible a successful night attack by the rest of the British forces.

Weeks had elapsed. The Germans were contesting every mile of waterless, thorn-covered ground and clinging desperately to their positions along the railway. The officers of the Rhodesians had seen nothing more of Tarzan of the Apes since he had slain Unterleutnant Von Goss and disappeared toward the very heart of the German position, and there were those among them who believed that he had been killed within the enemy lines.

"They may have killed him," assented Colonel Capell, "but I fancy they never captured the beggar alive."

Nor had they—nor killed him either! Tarzan had spent those intervening weeks pleasantly and profitably. He had amassed a considerable fund of knowledge concerning the disposition and strength of German troops, their methods of warfare and the various ways in which a lone Tarmangani might annoy an army and lower its morale.

At present Tarzan was prompted by a specific desire. There was a certain German spy whom he wished to capture alive and take back to the British. He had made his first visit to German headquarters shortly after his wife had been murdered by Hauptmann Fritz Schneider; upon that occasion he had seen a young woman deliver a paper to the German general, and later he had seen that same young woman within the British lines in the uniform of a British officer. The conclusion was obvious: she was a spy.

And so Tarzan haunted German headquarters upon many nights, hoping to see her again or to pick up some clue as to her whereabouts; and at the same time he utilized many an artifice whereby he might bring terror to the hearts of the Germans. That he was successful was often demonstrated by the snatches of conversation he overheard as he prowled through the German camps. One night as he lay concealed in the bushes close beside a regimental headquarters, he listened to the conversation of several boche officers. One of the men reverted to the stories told by the native troops in connection with their rout by a lion several weeks before and the simultaneous appearance in their trenches of a naked white giant whom they were perfectly assured was some demon of the jungle.

"The fellow must have been the same who leaped into the general's headquarters and carried off Schneider," asserted one. "I wonder how he happened to single out the major? They say the creature seemed interested in no one but Schneider. He had Von Kelter in his grasp, and he might easily have taken the general himself, but he ignored them all except Schneider. Him he pursued about the room, seized him and carried him off into the night. Gott knows what his fate was."

"Captain Fritz Schneider has some sort of theory," said another. "He told me only a week or two ago that he thinks he knows why his brother was taken—that it was a case of mistaken identity. He was not so sure about it until Von Goss was killed, apparently by this same creature, the night the lion entered the trenches. Von Goss was attached to Schneider's company. One of Schneider's men was found with his neck wrung the same night that the major was carried off, and Schneider thinks that this devil is after him and his command—that it came for him that night, and got his brother by mistake. He says Kraut told him that in presenting the major to Fraulein Kircher—the former's name was no sooner spoken than this wild man leaped through the window and made for him."

Suddenly the little group became rigid—listening. "What was that?" snapped one, eyeing the bushes from which a smothered snarl had issued as Tarzan of the Apes realized that through his mistake the perpetrator of the horrid crime at his bungalow still lived—that the murderer of his wife went yet unpunished.

For a long minute the officers stood with tensed nerves, every eye riveted upon the bushes whence the ominous sound had issued. Each recalled recent mysterious disappearances from the heart of camps as well as from lonely outposts. Each thought of the silent dead he had seen, slain almost within sight of their fellows by some unseen creature. Once the bushes moved almost imperceptibly, and an instant later one of the officers, without warning, fired into them, but Tarzan of the Apes was not there. In the interval between the moving of the bushes and the firing of the shot, he had melted into the night. Ten minutes later he was hovering on the

outskirts of that part of camp where were bivouacked for the night the black soldiers of a native company commanded by one Hauptmann Fritz Schneider. The men were stretched upon the ground without tents, but there were tents pitched for the officers. Toward these Tarzan crept. It was slow and perilous work, for the Germans were now upon the alert for the uncanny foe that crept into their camps to take his toll by night, yet the ape-man passed their sentinels, eluded the vigilance of the interior guard and crept at last to the rear of the officers' line.

Here he flattened himself against the ground close behind the nearest tent, and listened. From within came the regular breathing of a sleeping man—one only. Tarzan was satisfied. With his knife he cut the tie-strings of the rear flap, and entered. He made no noise. The shadow of a falling leaf, floating gently to earth upon a still day, could have been no less soundless. He moved to the side of the sleeping man and bent low over him. He could not know, of course, whether it was Schneider or another, for he had never seen Schneider, but he meant to know and to know even more.

Gently he shook the man by the shoulder. The fellow turned heavily and grunted.

"Silence!" admonished the ape-man in a low whisper. "Silence—I kill."

The Hun opened his eyes. In the dim light he saw a giant figure bending over him. Now a mighty hand grasped his shoulder, and another closed lightly about his throat.

"Make no outcry," commanded Tarzan, "but answer in a whisper my questions. What is your name?"

"Luberg," replied the officer. He was trembling. The weird presence of this naked giant filled him with dread. He, too, recalled the men mysteriously murdered in the still watches of the night camps. "What do you want?"

"Where is Hauptmann Fritz Schneider?" asked Tarzan. "Which is his tent?"

"He is not here," replied Luberg. "He was sent to Wilhelmstal yesterday."

"I shall not kill you—now," said the ape-man. "First I shall go and learn if you have lied to me, and if you have, your death shall be the more terrible. Do you know how Major Schneider died?"

Luberg shook his head negatively. "I do," continued Tarzan, "and it was not a nice way to die—even for an accursed German. Turn over with your face down, and cover your eyes. Do not move or make any sound."

The man did as he was bid, and the instant that his eyes were turned away, Tarzan slipped from the tent. An hour later he was outside the German camp and headed for the little hill town of Wilhelmstal, which was the summer seat of government of German East Africa.

FRAULEIN BERTHA KIRCHER knew that she was lost. She was humiliated and angry, that she, who prided herself upon her woodcraft, was lost in this little patch of country between the Pangani and the Tanga Railway. She knew that Wilhelmstal lay southeast of her about fifty miles, but through a combination of untoward circumstances she found herself unable to determine which direction was southeast.

In the first place she had set out from German headquarters on a well-marked road that was being traveled by troops, and she had every reason to believe that she would follow the road to Wilhelmstal. Later she had been warned from this road by word that a strong British patrol had come down the west bank of the Pangani, effected a crossing south of her and was even then marching on the railway at Tonda.

After leaving the road she had found herself in thick brush, and as the sky was heavily overcast, she presently sought recourse to her compass; not until then did she discover that she did not have it with her.

Her horse had traveled all day without food or water; night was approaching, and with it a realization that she was hopelessly lost in a wild and trackless country notorious principally for its tsetse flies and savage beasts. She found, just before dark, an open meadowlike break in the almost indistinguishable bush. There was a small clump of trees near the center, and here she decided to camp. The grass was high and thick, affording feed for her horse and a bed for herself, and there was more than enough dead wood lying about the trees to furnish a good fire well through the night. Removing the saddle and bridle from her mount, she placed them at the foot of a tree and then picketed the animal close by. Then she busied herself collecting firewood, and by the time darkness had fallen, she had a good fire and enough wood to last till morning.

From her saddlebags she took food and from her canteen a swallow of water. She could not afford more than a small drink, for she could not know how long a time it might be before she should find more. The horse must go waterless. It was now dark. There was neither moon nor stars, and the light from her fire only accentuated the blackness beyond. She could see the grass about her, and the boles of the trees, which stood out in brilliant relief against the solid background of impenetrable night; beyond the fire there was nothing.

The jungle seemed ominously quiet. Far away she heard faintly



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the boom of cannon, but she could not locate their direction. She arranged her saddle near the fire and pulled a quantity of long grass to make a comfortable seat, over which she spread her saddle-blanket. Then she unstrapped a heavy military coat from the canteer of her saddle and donned it, for the air was already chill. Seating herself where she could lean against the saddle, she prepared to maintain a sleepless vigil throughout the night.

The silence had been broken only by the distant booming of the guns and the low noises of the feeding horse; and then, from possibly a mile away, came the rumbling thunder of a lion's roar. The girl started and laid her hand upon the rifle at her side. A slight shudder ran through her slight frame, and she could feel the goose-flesh rise upon her body.

Again and again the awful sound was repeated, and each time she was certain it came nearer. She could locate the direction of this sound, although she could not place that of the guns, for the origin of the former was much closer. The lion was up wind, and so could not have caught her scent as yet, though he might be approaching to investigate the light of the fire.

Suddenly her horse raised his head and snorted, and with a little cry of terror the girl sprang to her feet. The animal turned and trotted back toward her until the picketed rope brought him to a stand, and then he wheeled about and with ears up he pricked gazed out into the night, but the girl could neither see nor hear anything beyond the fire.

An hour of terror passed, during which the horse often raised his head to peer long and searchingly into the dark. The girl replenished the fire from time to time. She found herself becoming very sleepy; her heavy lids persisted in drooping—but she dared not sleep. Fearful lest she might be overcome by the drowsiness that was stealing through her, she rose and walked briskly to and fro; then she threw some more wood on the fire, walked over and stroked her horse's muzzle and returned to her seat. Leaning against the saddle, she tried to occupy her mind with plans for the morrow.

With a start Fraulein Kircher

awoke. It was broad daylight. The hideous night was gone.

She could scarce believe the testimony of her senses. She had slept for hours; the fire was out, and yet she and the horse were safe and alive; nor was there a sign of savage beast about. And best of all, the sun was shining, pointing the straight road to the east. Hastily she ate a few mouthfuls of her precious rations, and took a swallow of water. Then she saddled her horse and mounted. Already she felt that she was as good as safe.

Possibly, however, she might have revised her conclusions could she have seen the two pairs of eyes watching her every move intently from different points in the bush.

Light-hearted and unsuspecting, the girl rode across the clearing toward the bush, while directly before her two yellow-green eyes glared round and terrible, and a tawny tail twitched nervously, and great, padded paws gathered beneath a sleek barrel for a mighty spring. The horse was almost at the edge of the bush when Numa the lion launched himself through the air. He struck the animal's right shoulder at the instant it reared, terrified, to wheel in flight. The force of the impact hurled the horse backward to the ground, and so quickly that the girl had no opportunity to extricate herself, but fell to the earth with her mount, her left leg pinned beneath its body.

Horror-stricken, she saw the king of beasts open his mighty jaws and seize the screaming creature by the back of its neck. The great jaws closed; there was an instant's struggle as Numa shook his prey. She could hear the vertebrae crack through them, and then the muscles of her faithful friend relaxed in death.

Numa crouched upon his kill. His terrifying eyes riveted themselves upon the girl's face; she could feel his hot breath upon her cheek, and the odor of the fetid vapor nauseated her. For what seemed an eternity to the girl the two lay staring at each other, and then the lion uttered a menacing growl.

Never before had Bertha Kircher been so terrified—never before had she had such cause for terror. At her hip was a pistol, a formidable

weapon with which to face a man, but a puny thing indeed with which to menace the great beast before her. She knew that at best it could but enrage him, and yet she meant to sell her life dearly, for she knew that she must die. No human succor could have availed her even had it been there to offer itself. For a moment she tore her gaze from the hypnotic fascination of that awful face and breathed a last prayer.

No one can prophesy what a lion will do in any given emergency. This one glared and growled at the girl for a moment and then—fell to feeding upon the dead horse. Fraulein Kircher wondered for an instant and then began to attempt to draw her leg cautiously from beneath the body of her mount, but she could not budge it. She increased the force of her efforts, and Numa looked up from his feeding to growl again. The girl desisted. She hoped that a might satisfy his hunger and then depart, but she could not believe that he would leave her there alive. Doubtless he would drag the remains of his kill into the bush for hiding, and as there could be no doubt that he considered her part of his prey, he would certainly come back for her, or possibly drag her in first and kill her.

Again Numa fell to feeding. The girl's nerves were at the breaking-point. She wondered that she had not fainted under the strain of terror and shock. She recalled that she had often wished that she might see a lion make a kill and feed upon it. How realistically her wish had been granted!

Again she bethought herself of her pistol. As she had fallen, the holster had slipped around so that the weapon now lay beneath her. Very slowly she reached for it, but in doing so she was forced to raise her body from the ground. Instantly the lion was aroused. With the swiftness of a cat he reached across the carcass of the horse and placed a heavy, taloned paw upon her breast, crushing her back to earth; and all the time he growled and snarled horribly. His face was a picture of rage incarnate. For a moment neither moved, and then from behind her the girl heard a human voice uttering beseeching sounds. Numa looked suddenly up from the girl's face at the thing beyond

her. His growls increased to roars as he drew back, ripping the front of the girl's waist almost from her body with his long talons, exposing her white bosom, which through some miracle of chance the claws did not touch.

Tarzan of the Apes had witnessed the entire encounter from the moment that Numa had leaped upon his prey. For some time he had been watching the girl, and after the lion attacked her, he had at first been minded to let Numa have his way with her. What was she but a hated German, and a spy besides? He had seen her at General Kraut's headquarters in conference with the German staff, and again he had seen her within the British lines masquerading as a British officer. It was the latter thought that prompted him to interfere. Doubtless General Jan Smuts would be glad to meet and question her. She might be forced to divulge information of value to the British commander before Smuts had her shot.

Tarzan had not only recognized the girl, but the lion as well. All lions may look alike to you and me, but not so to their intimates of the jungle. Each has his individual characteristics of face and form and gait, as well defined as those that differentiate members of the human family; and besides these, the creatures of the jungle have a still more positive test—that of scent. Each of us, man or beast, has his own peculiar odor, and it is more by this than the beasts of the jungle, endowed with miraculous powers of scent, recognize individuals.

Tarzan recognized Numa as he whom he had muzzled with the hide of Horta the boar—as he whom he had led by a rope for two days and finally loosed in a German front-line trench; and he knew that Numa would recognize him, that he would remember the sharp spear that had goaded him into submission and obedience; and Tarzan hoped that the lesson he had learned still remained with the lion.

Now he came forward, calling to Numa in the language of the great apes—warning him away from the girl. It is open to question that Numa the lion understood him, but he did understand the menace of the heavy spear that the Tarmangani carried so ready in his brown right

hand, and so the lion drew back, growling, trying to decide in his little brain whether to charge or flee.

On came the ape-man with never a pause, straight for the lion. "Go away, Numa," he cried, "or Tarzan will tie you up again and lead you through the jungle without food. See Arad, my spear? Do you recall how this point stuck into you and how with this haft I beat you over the head? Go, Numa! I am Tarzan of the Apes!"

Numa wrinkled the skin of his face into great folds, until his eyes almost disappeared, and he growled and roared and snarled and growled again; and when the spear-point came at last quite close to him, he struck at it viciously with his armed paw. But he drew back. Tarzan stepped over the dead horse, and the girl lying there gazed in wide-eyed astonishment at the handsome figure driving an angry lion deliberately from its kill.

WHEN Numa had retreated a few yards, the ape-man called back to the girl in perfect German: "Are you badly hurt?"

"I think not," she replied. "But I can't pull my foot from under my horse."

"Try again," commanded Tarzan. "I don't know how long I can hold Numa."

The girl struggled frantically, but at last she sank back upon an elbow. "It's impossible," she called to him.

Tarzan backed slowly until he was again beside the horse; then he reached down and grasped the saddle-girth, which was still intact. Then with one hand he raised the carcass from the ground. The girl freed herself and rose to her feet.

"You can walk?" asked Tarzan. "Yes," she said. "My leg is numb; but it doesn't seem to be hurt."

"Good!" commented the ape-man. "Back slowly away behind me—make no sudden movements. I don't think he will charge."

With the utmost deliberation the two backed toward the bush. Numa stood for a moment growling; then he followed them, slowly. Tarzan wondered if he would come beyond his kill, or if he would stop there. If he followed them beyond, they could look for a charge; and if Numa charged it was very likely that he would get one of them. When the lion reached the carcass of the horse, Tarzan stopped, and so did Numa, as Tarzan had thought that he would, and the ape-man waited to see what the lion would do next. Numa eyed them for a moment, snarled angrily and then looked down at the meat. Presently he crouched upon his kill and resumed feeding.

The girl breathed a deep sigh of relief as she and the ape-man resumed their slow retreat, with only an occasional glance from the lion, and when at last they reached the bush and had turned and entered it, she felt a sudden giddiness overwhelm her, so that she staggered and would have fallen had Tarzan not caught her. It was only a moment before she regained her self-control.

"I could not help it," she said in half-apology. "I was so close to death, such a horrible death, it unnerved me for an instant; but I'm all right now. How can I ever thank you? It was so wonderful; you didn't seem to fear the frightful creature in the least; yet he was afraid of you. Who are you?"

"He knows me," replied Tarzan grimly. "That is why he fears me."

He was standing facing the girl now, and for the first time he had a chance to look at her squarely and fully. She was very beautiful—that was undeniable; but Tarzan realized her beauty only in a subconscious way. It was superficial; it did not color her soul, which must be black as sin. She was German—a German spy. He hated her, and desired only to compass her destruction; but he would choose the manner, so that it would work most grievously against the enemy cause.

He saw her naked breast where Numa had torn her clothing from her, and dangling there against the soft, white flesh he saw that which brought a sudden scowl of surprise and anger to his face—the diamond-studded golden locket of his youth, the love-token that had been stolen from the breast of his murdered mate by Schneider the Hun. The girl saw the scowl but did not interpret it correctly. Tarzan grasped her roughly by the arm.

"Where did you get this?" he demanded as he tore the bauble from her.

The girl drew herself to her full height. "Take your hand from me," she ordered. But the ape-man paid no attention.

"Answer me!" he snapped. "Where did you get this?"

"What is it to you?" she countered.

"It is mine," he replied. "Tell me who gave it to you, or I will throw you back to Numa."

"You would do that?" "Why not?" he queried. "You are a spy, and spies must die if they are caught."

"You are going to kill me, then?" "I was going to take you to headquarters. They would dispose of you there; but Numa can do it quite as effectually. Which do you prefer?"

"Hauptmann Fritz Schneider gave it to me," she said.

"Headquarters it will be, then," said Tarzan. "Come."

The girl moved at his side through the bush, and all the time her mind worked quickly. They were moving east, which suited her, and as long as they continued to move east, she

was glad to have the protection of the great white savage. She speculated much upon the fact that her pistol still swung at her hip. The man must be mad not to take it from her.

"What makes you think I am a spy?" she asked after a long silence. "I saw you at German headquarters," he replied, "and then again inside the British lines."

She could not let him take her back to them. She must reach Wilhelmstal at once, and she was determined to do so even if she must have recourse to her pistol. She cast a side-glance at the tall figure. What a magnificent creature! But yet he was a brute who would kill her or have her killed if she did not slay him.

And the locket! She must have that back; it must not fall to reach Wilhelmstal. Tarzan was now a foot or two ahead of her in the narrow path. Cautiously she drew her pistol. A single shot would suffice, and he was so close that she could not miss. As she figured it all out, her eyes rested on the brown skin with the graceful muscles rolling beneath it, and the perfect limbs and head and the carriage that a proud king of old might have envied.

A wave of revulsion for her contemplated act surged through her. No, she could not do it; yet she must be free, and she must regain possession of the locket. And then, almost blindly, she swung the weapon up and struck Tarzan heavily upon the back of the head with its butt. Like a felled ox he dropped in his tracks.

AN hour later Sheeta the leopard, hunting, chanced to glance upward into the blue sky, where his attention was attracted by Ska the vulture circling slowly above the bush a mile away and down-wind. For a minute the yellow eyes stared intently at the bird. They saw Ska dive and rise again to continue his ominous circling, and in these movements their woodcraft read that which, while obvious to Sheeta would doubtless have meant nothing to you or me.

The hunting cat guessed that on the ground beneath Ska was some living thing of flesh—either a beast feeding upon its kill or a dying animal that Ska did not yet dare attack. In either event it might prove meat for Sheeta, and so the wary feline stalked by a circuitous route, upon soft, padded feet that gave forth no sound, until the circling Ska and his intended prey were up-wind. Then, sniffing each vagrant zephyr, Sheeta the leopard crept cautiously forward; nor had he advanced any considerable distance before his keen nostrils were rewarded with the scent of man—a Tarmangani.

Sheeta paused. He was not a hunter of men. He was young and in his prime; but always previously he had avoided this hated presence. Of late he had become more accustomed to it, with the passing of many soldiers through his ancient hunting ground, and as the soldiers had frightened away a great part of the game Sheeta had been wont to feed upon, the days had been lean and Sheeta was hungry.

The circling Ska suggested that this Tarmangani might be helpless and upon the point of dying, and so easy prey for Sheeta. With this thought in mind the cat resumed his stalking. Presently he pushed through the thick bush, and his yellow-green eyes rested gloatingly upon the body of an almost naked Tarmangani lying face down in a narrow game trail.

Numa, sated, rose from the carcass of Bertha Kircher's horse, seized the partly devoured body by the neck and dragged it into the bush; then he started east toward the lair where he had left his mate. With his appetite satisfied, he was very comfortable and inclined to be sleepy and far from belligerent. He moved slowly and majestically with no effort at silence or concealment. The king walked abroad unafraid.

With an occasional regal glance to right or left, he moved along a narrow game trail until at a turn he came to a sudden stop at what lay revealed before him—Sheeta the leopard creeping stealthily upon the almost naked body of a Tarmangani lying face down in the deep dust of the pathway. Numa glared intently at the quiet body in the dust. Recognition came; it was his Tarmangani. A low growl of warning rumbled from his throat; Sheeta halted with one paw upon Tarzan's back and turned suddenly to eye the intruder.

FOR a moment the latter stood his ground with arched back and snarling face, for all the world like a great, spotted tabby. Numa had not felt like fighting; but the sight of Sheeta daring to dispute his rights kindled his ferocious brain to sudden rage. His undulating tail snapped to stiff erectness as with a roar he charged.

It came so suddenly and from so short a distance that Sheeta had no chance to turn and flee the rush, and so he met it with raking talons and snapping jaws. But the odds were all against him. To the larger fangs and the more powerful jaws of his adversary were added huge talons and the preponderance of the lion's great weight. At the first clash Sheeta was crushed, and though he deliberately fell upon his back and drew up his powerful hind legs beneath Numa with the intention of dismembering him, the lion forestalled him and at the same time closed his awful jaws upon Sheeta's throat.

It was soon over. Numa rose, Continued on Page Twenty-two, Column 12.